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1989/06/03

TEXT OF TELEGRAM 89BEIJIN015388 UNCLASSIFIED

(X3)

ADP596
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RELEASED

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ACTION EAP-00

INFO LOG-00 ADS-00 INR-07 EUR-00 SS-00 CIAE-00 EB-00
H-01 NSCE-00 NSAE-00 COME-00 SSO-00 HA-09 L-03
TRSE-00 PM-10 AIT-02 PA-01 OMB-01 STR-18 SIL-01
INRE-00 ANAE-00 USIE-00 SP-02 SNP-01 PRS-01 P-02
T-01 /050 W

-----336331 030537Z /10

O 030515Z JUN 89 ZFP4
FM AMEMBASSY BEIJING
TO SECSTATE WASHDC NIACT IMMEDIATE 0041
INFO AMEMBASSY TOKYO
AMEMBASSY SEOUL
AMEMBASSY MOSCOW
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY PARIS
AMEMBASSY BANGKOK
AMCONSUL HONG KONG IMMEDIATE
AIT TAIPEI IMMEDIATE
USCINCPAC HONOLULU HI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL GUANGZHOU IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SHANGHAI IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL SHENYANG IMMEDIATE
DIA WASHDC IMMEDIATE
AMCONSUL CHENGDU POUCH)

C O N F I D E N T I A L SECTION 01 OF 02 BEIJING 15388

NIACT IMMEDIATE FOR CHINA WATCH ONLY

NSC FOR DOUG PAAL
CINCPAC FOR FPA

E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
TAGS: PGOV, PHUM, SOCI, CH
SUBJECT: SITREP NO. 27: MARTIAL LAW WITH CHINESE
- CHARACTERISTICS
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1. C - ENTIRE TEXT.
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2. THE PEOPLE OF BEIJING AWOKE ON SATURDAY, JUNE 3, TO WITNESS AN EXTRAORDINARY SIGHT: THOUSANDS OF YOUNG SOLDIERS, BEDRAGGLED, BEFUDDED AND SOME EVEN WEEPING, WANDERING THROUGH THE CITY IN GROUPS RANGING FROM A HANDFUL TO HUNDREDS, IN AN UNORGANIZED RETREAT OUT OF THE CITY CENTER. FROM ABOUT 0530 TO 0800 WE WITNESSED

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THE FOLLOWING STRANGE EVENTS:

-- A BUS FULL OF ABOUT FORTY SOLDIERS SURROUNDED BY A CROWD OF SEVERAL THOUSAND ANGRY CITIZENS AT THE CORNER OF CHANGAN (THE CITY'S MAIN EAST-WEST ROAD) AND XIDAN. ON TOP OF THE BUS, STUDENTS AND OTHER YOUNG PEOPLE TOOK TURNS POSING FOR PHOTOS HOLDING A RIFLE TAKEN FROM ONE OF THE SOLDIERS AND WEARING A HELMET AND OTHER "CAPTURED" PARAPHERNALIA.

- ANOTHER BUS WITH A SIMILAR NUMBER OF SOLDIERS ABOUT TWO BLOCKS AWAY, IMMOBILIZED BY A LARGE CROWD AND BUSES PARKED ACROSS THE ROAD. SEVERAL PEOPLE IN THE CROWD SAID THAT SOLDIERS WERE ARMED WITH RIFLES AND GRENADES.

-- IN FRONT OF THE MAIN GATE OF THE ZHONGNANHAI LEADERSHIP COMPOUND, A STUDENT WAS DISPLAYING TO A CROWD OF SEVERAL HUNDRED A FLEXIBLE METAL ROD WHICH THE SPEAKER SAID WAS CARRIED BY ALL THE SOLDIERS. THE SPEAKER SAID THE ROD COULD BE USED FOR BEATING OR GARROTTING PEOPLE. THIS SAME SCENE WAS REPEATED IN SEVERAL LOCATIONS AROUND THE CITY. (NOTE: THE RODS IN FACT ARE FLEXIBLE LOOPS USED TO HOLD THE SOLDIERS' CONFIDENTIAL

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GARRISON HATS IN SHAPE. LIKE A BELT BUCKLE, THE RODS CAN BE USED TO INFILCT INJURY. END NOTE.)

-- NEAR THE OLD OBSERVATORY ABOUT 300 SOLDIERS SITTING ON THE GROUND WERE SURROUNDED BY SEVERAL TIMES THAT MANY CITIZENS WHO STERNLY LECTURED THE SOLDIERS ON THE ERRORS OF THEIR WAYS. ELDERLY WOMEN COULD BE SEEN SCOLDING 17-YEAR-OLD SOLDIERS WHO LOOKED SHAME-FACED AT THE GROUND.

-- NEAR THE RAILWAY STATION, GROUPS OF 5-10 SOLDIERS WERE SEEN WANDERING AIMLESSLY, GAPPING AT THE BIG CITY AND PROCEEDING IN THE OPPOSITE DIRECTION FROM THEIR COLLEAGUES ON THE PARALLEL MAIN ROAD.

-- MOST OF THE SOLDIERS WHO WERE NOT IN SOME WAY IMMOBILIZED BY CROWDS PROCEEDED OUT OF THE CITY CENTER, HEADING BACK TO THE EASTERN SUBURB OF TONGXIAN, FROM WHICH THEY HAD DEPARTED EARLIER IN THE EVENING. WE SAW TWO GROUPS OF SEVERAL HUNDRED EACH, HOWEVER, WHICH ENTERED SITES CLOSE TO THE CITY CENTER. IT WAS NOT CLEAR HOW LONG THEY WOULD STAY AT THOSE LOCATIONS.

3. COMMENT: OUR DATT HAS DESCRIBED THE ONGOING EVENTS AS "A CHINESE VERSION OF NAPOLEON'S RETREAT FROM MOSCOW." AT LEAST NAPOLEON'S TROOPS DID NOT HAVE THE

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HUMILIATION OF BEING LECTURED IN THEIR OWN LANGUAGE BY GRANDMOTHERLY WOMEN CALLING THEM "BAD BOYS" OR "A DISGRACE TO THE PLA." AS DATT HAS REPORTED, ONE POSSIBLE EXPLANATION OF THE "PLAN" FOR LAST NIGHT WAS THAT THE TROOPS WHO ENTERED BY FOOT WERE TO CORDON OFF TIANANMEN SQUARE WHILE THE PAP AND OTHER TROOPS WHO CAME IN BY BUS WOULD USE CLUBS AND POSSIBLY OTHER WEAPONS TO IN SOME WAY FORCE THE STUDENTS OUT OF THE

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SQUARE. WHATEVER THE PLAN WAS, THE RESULT WAS A COMPLETE DISASTER. A CITY WHICH -- WITH THE NOTABLE EXCEPTION OF THE CENTRAL SQUARE -- HAD BEGUN TO RETURN TO NORMAL IS NOW GALVANIZED AGAIN TO CONFRONT THE AUTHORITIES. BARRICADES HAVE BEEN RESTORED AT MANY APPROACHES TO THE SQUARE AND THE CENTER OF THE CITY SEEKS TO BE ONCE AGAIN IN THE CONTROL OF DEMONSTRATORS. CITIZENS ARE ANGERED BY THE EVIDENCE THAT SOME SOLDIERS WERE CARRYING FIREARMS AND THAT A LARGER NUMBER POSSESSED

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THE FLEXIBLE METAL RODS, WHICH MOST PEOPLE SEEM CONVINCED WERE TO BE USED FOR PULLING PEOPLE BY THE NECK. MANY PEOPLE WHO APPROACHED US ON THE STREET SEEMED TO PROFESS A GENUINE DISILLUSIONMENT THAT THE SOLDIERS HAD AFTER ALL COME PREPARED TO USE VIOLENCE. WITH THE UNSEEMLY RETREAT, THE CITIZENS' ANGER TOWARDS THE MILITARY (AND THE AUTHORITIES BEHIND THEM) NOW IS MIXED WITH RIDICULE AND CONTEMPT. ONE MAN COMMENTED TO US ON THE STREET AT 0700 THAT ONE SHOULD NOT BE SURPRISED AT THE NIGHT'S EVENTS SINCE THROUGHOUT CHINESE HISTORY, WHENEVER RULERS HAVE NO SOLUTION FOR PROBLEMS WHICH THEY THEMSELVES HAVE CREATED, "THEY DO VERY FOOLISH THINGS." OF COURSE THERE ARE OTHER EXPLANATIONS WHICH WE CAN NEITHER PROVE NOR DISCARD AT THIS POINT: THAT IT WAS A PLAN WHICH THE EXECUTORS KNEW WOULD FAIL, BUT INTENDED EITHER TO PROVE THAT MUCH STRONGER FORCE WILL BE NECESSARY TO REGAIN CONTROL OR, ALTERNATIVELY, TO DEMONSTRATE THAT ANY MILITARY SOLUTION WILL BE COUNTERED BY THE POPULACE. END COMMENT.

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